

HEHF prepares for October flu-shot clinics

Fall is just around the corner, and the flu season is not far behind. With an eye on the seasons, the Hanford Environmental Health Foundation is gearing up to deliver flu shots to Hanford employees at 15 work-site clinics. Judi Staley, a registered nurse with HEHF's Health Education Services, describes the influenza immunization program during an interview with the *Hanford Reach*.

Hanford Reach: How long has HEHF been providing flu shots at Hanford?

Staley: HEHF has provided flu shots to Hanford workers since 1993. Because of this program, thousands of people have been protected from major strains of influenza, a serious respiratory illness that can lead to fatal complications. You know, people are much more likely to be vaccinated if they can get their flu shot at a convenient time and place. What could be more convenient than getting your flu shot at or near your work location?

Hanford Reach: HEHF gave almost 6,000 flu shots last year. How far ahead of the flu season does HEHF need to plan for the flu-shot clinics?

Staley: Planning for the HEHF's flu-shot program takes months — the vaccine is ordered in January, and the clinic schedules are decided in April. Flu clinics usually begin in October. Stickers, buttons and posters are created with a new theme each year. This year the theme is "Don't Let the Flu Get You — Vaccinate." Past buttons are considered Hanford collectibles.

Hanford Reach: Sounds like this is a popular program. Is there much of a wait to get a shot?

Staley: Over the years, HEHF has implemented improvements to the program in order to shorten waiting time. The process needs to be efficient to accommodate the number of participants we have. The flu-shot team — dubbed "the Flu-zies" — arrives 30 to 45 minutes before the clinic begins. They set up the nurses' stations and prepare the area with informational and directional signs. The administrative staff greets the employees and completes the paperwork.

Hanford Reach: How do you handle people who really hate immunizations?.

Staley: The nursing staff and the assistants at our clinics strive to alleviate any fears or uncertainties any employees may feel. Some people have a "needle phobia," but still know how important it is to protect themselves from the flu. The staff takes whatever time is necessary to answer questions and provide support.

Hanford Reach: Any adverse reactions to the shots?

Staley: Reactions to the shot are very rare. Out of the thousands of shots given, I can remember only one person who felt slightly dizzy afterwards. Several years ago, one person fainted, but he was waiting in line and fainted before he got his shot.

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Check the schedule on page 7 for the flu clinic closest to your work area. You can also call the HEHF Flu Hotline at 376-1000 for information and daily updates.

HEHF prepares for October flu-shot clinics, cont.

Hanford Reach: Any changes from 2002?

Staley: Last year HEHF vaccinated 5,910 Hanford employees — more than 1,100 participated in the clinic held at the Battelle Auditorium. Several *per diem* nurses from the community were hired to administer the injections and very little paperwork was required of the participants. This year should go well also, even though a few changes will occur. Participants will be asked to initial that they were offered a privacy practices notice. The nursing staff will be using new syringes that are not pre-filled with the vaccine. We expect any additional waiting time to be minimal.

Hanford Reach: Are there times when the lines may be shorter?

Staley: Typically the first week is very busy. Often by the third week, the lines are very short with little or no waiting. It's impossible to meet the needs of all the workers, but we have had several requests for early clinics so the night-shift workers can take advantage of this opportunity. To answer this need, the 100K, 100N and 200 West (MO-250) Areas will have clinics that start at 6 or 6:30 a.m. One late-afternoon clinic is also scheduled in the 200 West Area. Hanford employees who cannot come to a clinic in their own work area are welcome to attend any clinic that is convenient for them.

Hanford Reach: Any restrictions on who is eligible for the flu shots?

Staley: Employees wishing to get a flu shot must have a Department of Energy security badge, and HEHF *does not* provide flu shots for employees who:

- are under the age of 18
- are pregnant
- have symptoms of any acute illness (cold or flu)
- are employees of Bechtel, Inc., or Battelle Columbus.

Flu shots will not be available at the HEHF Health Care Centers except to those needing vaccinations for business travel.

Hanford Reach: This year's flu clinics seem to be starting early.

Staley: Yes, this year the clinics begin Oct. 13, and continue through Oct. 30. The earlier dates will accommodate individuals who fall into the "at risk" category for getting influenza and those who may have occasion to pass the virus on to someone in the high-risk category. The Centers for Disease Control identifies the following at-risk individuals:

- People 50 years or older
- Residents of long-term care facilities
- People with long-term health problems
- People with weakened immune systems
- People six months to 18 years of age who are on long-term aspirin treatment
- Pregnant women who are past the third month of pregnancy during flu season
- Physicians, nurses, family members or anyone coming in close contact with people at risk of serious influenza. ■

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2003 Flu Immunization Schedule

Area	Clinic Date	Time	Location
Battelle	Monday, Oct. 13	9 a.m.-3 p.m.	Battelle Auditorium
Battelle	Tuesday, Oct. 28	9 a.m.-noon	Battelle Auditorium
200E Area	Tuesday, Oct. 14	9 a.m.-2 p.m.	2101-M, Cosmos/Bijou Room
200E Area	Thursday, Oct. 30	10 a.m.-1 p.m.	2101-M, Cosmos/Bijou Room
Federal Building	Wednesday, Oct. 15	9 a.m.-2 p.m.	825 Jadwin, room 142
Federal Building	Wednesday, Oct. 29	9 -11 a.m.	825 Jadwin, room 142
100K Area	Thursday, Oct. 16	6 a.m.-noon	MO-500, Conference Room West
200 West Area	Monday, Oct. 20	6:30 -9 a.m.	MO-250
200 West Area	Wednesday, Oct. 22	9 a.m.-2 p.m.	MO-287,Conference Room A111
200 West Area	Wednesday, Oct. 29	1-5 p.m.	HEHF Health Care Center, 2719
300 Area	Monday,Oct. 20	11 a.m.-3 p.m.	3763, Conference Room
100N	Tuesday, Oct. 21	6:30 -9 a.m.	1103N Conference Room A & B
Bechtel	Tuesday, Oct. 21	11:30 a.m.- 2:30 p.m.	3350 George Washington Way, Assembly Room
2440 Stevens Center	Thursday, Oct. 23	9 a.m.-2 p.m.	Conference Room 1200
400 Area	Monday, Oct. 27	10 a.m.-1 p.m.	4710-A, conference room (Only employees working in this secured area may participate)